

California Rural Counties Task Force

MINUTES

March 15, 2002

Welcome and Self-Introductions – Chairman Celia McAdam called meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. in Room 2116 of the Caltrans building at 1120 N street, Sacramento. She invited those present to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes for January meeting was deferred.

Kevin Rosser (Tehama) asked whether the RCTF will take a position on (50-50) STIP redivision, proposed in *2001 CTC Report*, which reduces local decision-making authority. Members agreed that if/when STIP legislation is introduced, the RCTF will consider taking position.

State Budget Impact to Transportation – For information only, Chairman McAdam provided the Legislative Analysts's Office 2002/03 Governor's Budget that affects transportation.

RCTF 'Web Board' Demonstration – Accessed through CTC webpage (www.ctc.ca.gov), Kathie Jacobs showed web board features including "conferences" = Q/A/comments on specific topics; ability to handle (sizable) attachments; "subscription" = individuals select through 'edit profile' to receive notice when message posted to certain conference; "closed conference" = restricted access; "meeting" = arranged date and time 'chat'; moderator able to delete something posted to his/her conference. Jacobs is web board administrator, who sets up access for individuals, conferences and moderators. (CTIPs demo planned for next meeting.)

Road Rehabilitation STIP Eligibility (AB2275) – DeAnn Baker from CSAC expressed her concerns about the bill. CSAC staff believes AB2275 prematurely concedes the issues, and wants continued flexibility for all counties, at minimum until 2008/09. Further, she conveyed discomfort about moving forward to put restrictions on current eligibility. While Baker had not discussed her views with CSAC Board, she said that she wants to do "ground work" with Governor's office first; she thinks the legislature already supports continued flexibility. RCTF members supported AB2275, noting that Caltrans will pursue fundamental change in SB45; several noted that SB45/regional choice has been in effect only for three (3) years, while State choice existed for several decades.

Chuck Oldham noted SB45 is not working for State (10% cap); Governor needs way to do huge projects.

Pam Couch asked Baker if there weren't some way to amend AB2275, so CSAC would not oppose. She noted that RCTF wants to work with CSAC. Discussion ensued about possible amendments. Couch invited Baker to communicate with RCTF members via our web board; Baker agreed.

Baker shared plans to seek different (Democrat) sponsor for new bill. She noted that counties need comprehensive database for infrastructure; Baker underscored need for State involvement and support to accomplish. After discussion, Darrin Grossi volunteered to draft letter for McAdam's signature, requesting follow up on Governor's veto for comprehensive PMS system.

2002 STIP Issues – CTC's David Brewer reviewed staff recommendation for programming. He noted these facts: capacity = \$3.8B; proposed projects = \$4.2B; CTC staff recommends \$3.6B to leave \$200M

“reserve” for amendments. He asked for immediate notice about errors or technical corrections on CTC staff report. Brewer then reported that 2000 STIP delays are estimated at \$800M. He outlined expected CTC procedure to adopt at April meeting. Brewer advised that CTC believes “everything should be programmed now,” even if construction during late cycle.

Celia McAdam noted that projects could be moved forward and deal with programming dilemma through two mechanisms: 1) Garvee bonds – attractive option for capacity improvements to pay interest now, rather than escalation costs later. 2) AB3090 – allowing regions to use own money, then, be repaid. Brewer noted these mechanisms aren’t very feasible for small projects, although they could be bundled. However, he questioned necessity of doing so, asking “Is project(s) so worthwhile to justify?” Brewer discussed difference between “programming” and “cash flow,” noting some projects may need to wait until 2004 STIP. Charles Field expressed concern about need for small rurals to keep “balanced checkbook,” particularly with so many future uncertainties and probability that “the rules” will change – perhaps dramatically – making the small, rural counties “pay the piper” perhaps for years to come. Brewer commented that he wouldn’t want to be the first agency to step up with the first Garvee, but left it for others to decide.

Transportation Finance Bank Revolving Loan Program – Mike Yee presented overview of the program, which can provide financing to cap. \$3M (whole project) with match same as federal. He explained the program is useful for very small projects. Loan parameters include: 0.8% rate plus 0.5% loan fee; 6 years to repay; minimum \$300,000 loan; subject to CTC approval.

California Transportation Plan (CTP) – Susan Dona presented update on CTP and process. She noted these features and milestones: an “exciting” executive summary (intended); enhanced outreach especially to Title VI groups on District level during May and June; and 45-day review and comment period beginning after okayed. Dona invited comments now. Kevin Rosser questioned whether CTP included discussion about different STIP fund split. George Dondero asked about the expected life for CTP. Dona answered about 5 years. He asked if there was any expectation by State for regions to reflect new CTP in existing RTPs. Dona responded that “consistency in policy” is required. Gene Murtey noted that CTP drives policy for ITSP, which directly relates to RTPs.

Status Reports on RCTF Issues briefly discussed according to list; some items were removed.

Announcements – Kathie Jacobs told group that future meetings would be held elsewhere, because Room 2116 is no longer available. For those needing new Caltrans ID, contact Kathie for paperwork. Next meeting is May 17, 2002 at 12:30 p.m. McAdam adjourned the meeting at about 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Couch
RCTF Secretary
Modoc County Transportation Commission